

Leys News

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You are cordially invited to attend the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of Leys News Limited

On Wednesday 25 May 2011 at 7.00pm
in the Leys News Office

See page 2 for details

ISSUE 83 | APRIL 2011

FRIENDS FOR 50 YEARS!



NEIGHBOURS in Nunnery Close are celebrating half a century of living on Blackbird Leys and say that even if they won the lottery they would not be tempted to move away.

To celebrate their happy half century, they will be throwing a street party to coincide with the Royal Wedding celebrations.

Liz Brandon and husband Bill were among the group of neighbours who moved into their homes when they were newly built. She said: "We all love living here and are good friends. We get on well, never fall out and we have made it a lovely place to live."

Pam Dawson who worked at

Orchard Meadow School for 37 years, added: "We all moved in when the houses were built and all brought our children up here. I would hate to have to move."

Jacky Perks added: "I love it here! It's quiet and we help each other out. I have spent a lot of my life caring for other members of my family and it means a lot to

know that I have some really good friends very close by who I can rely on to keep a look out for me. It's really important to have good friends around you. Communities are not like this any more."

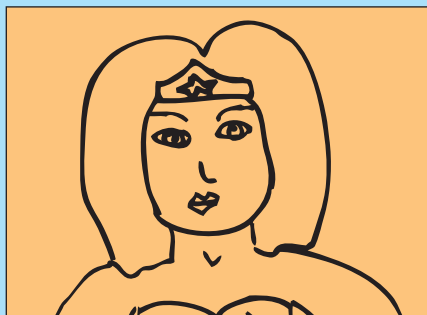
All the friends feel that the sense of community and support that has developed between

them is really important. Brenda and Keith Beasley added that the close is quiet and peaceful. Brenda said: "I would never change a thing! We never fall out and there is truly a great sense of community. We are always there to help each other out."

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Diamond celebration for Blackbird publicans. Page 3



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Dovecote Afloat project sets sail. Page 3



Enter the Leys Scarecrow Competition now! Page 12

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Leys News 83

APRIL 2011

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SUBMISSIONS

LEYS NEWS welcomes submissions and ideas for articles and photographs from all sectors of the community. If you would like to send us a press release about your community project please email it to editor@leysnews.co.uk and we will consider it for publication in a future issue.

PLEASE NOTE: do not embed photos and logos into word documents but send them as separate picture files.

The deadline for advertising and editorial copy for the May issue is 15 April.

Editorial Meetings

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 5 April, 10.30am at the Boiler Room Cafe. Tell us your news, views and ideas of what you would like to see in the paper.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

You are cordially invited to attend the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Leys News Limited

On Wednesday 25 May 2011 at 7.00pm

in the Leys News Office

26 Kingfisher Green, Blackbird Leys

Oxford OX4 7BX

Light refreshments will be available

R.S.V.P. to the Office Manager
on 01865 711756 or
officemanager@leysnews.co.uk

Hi there!

SPRING Is most definitely on its way and this is a very positive and uplifting time of year. This edition of Leys News is equally uplifting and inspiring and is packed with great stories about things that are happening across the Leys.

As well as some great stories and features we have some brilliant competitions and a reader offer, so it's definitely time to get out of hibernation and get your thinking caps on! We have a book and craft goodies up for grabs, and our

friends at Cash Generator are giving away a television! Check out our special offer on the gardening page as we have teamed up with Suttons Seeds to offer our green fingered readers the chance to try a new variety of Verbena.

Probably one of the best stories in this issue has to be about the Dovecote Afloat project. Staff have worked tirelessly

to secure funding for this important project that will bring a very different dimension to the lives of many young people on the Leys. Look out in next month's issue for pictures from the official launch.

Have a great month!

Sarah Edwards
Editor

COMPETITION WINNERS

FUNomusica winner: *Mrs C White of Blackbird Leys*
Fairtrade Fortnight Book Competition: *Alex McDonald, Age 9 of Blackbird Leys.*

Turn to page 7 to enter our gardening competition.

READERS LETTERS

Response to the March edition of Leys News

Dear Leys News,

I still feel very upset at the front page story of the March edition of the Leys News; and I felt urged to write a letter of complaint because I feel your story concerning the 'Save Our Library' meeting has been misrepresented in your newspaper. To me, the front page article is 3 separate news stories wrapped up into one:

- The 'Save Our Library' meeting on 26 January 2011, at the Blackbird Leys Youth & Community Centre.
- The BBC Radio 4 interview about 'Big Society'.
- The 'Big Society' fund of £600,000.00 set up by Oxfordshire County Council.

The 'Save Our Library' meeting was attended by approximately 30 people who feels as strongly about the library closure and we met with Councillor Val Smith and Councillor Richard Stevens to voice our concerns; many local people were able to ask questions

and raised their points with them. My participation in the Radio 4's Analysis show about Big Society, which was recorded many days before the library meeting at Blackbird Leys, viewed my personal opinion on 'Big Society' and you took just a small portion of what I said which I feel has been taken out of context and been made to fit your news story. Yes, I feel that as a community, we should be empowered to be more involved in our local area including the decisions made, as it directly affects us. But I am sure my comments also included that I felt that the 'Big Society' was a long way off and that the council still needed to fund and support communities for it to work. I stand by what I said in regards to the 'Big Society', in its entirety! I have seen the transcript of my interview and it is clear I also told Chris Bowlby, 'I was not entirely sure what the 'Big Society' meant in practice, but liked what I'd heard so far'. In

response to being asked, 'if some of the funding for the service is being withdrawn already - say the library as an example locally - are local groups in a position to take them over now? I said 'I don't think they would be. If we've had very good librarians and people managing libraries, to turn round and say volunteers could do that, I think we're doing all those qualified people a disservice. But I do think with sufficient funding and training, there is a possibility that that could happen but not in the short-term'. It is my opinion that the article on the front page did not, (in any way, shape or form), reflect the local community's feelings, comments or questions raised at the 'Save Our Library' meeting on 26 February 2011; a useful and much needed resource on the 'Leys'.

There were many comments made at the meeting and not one single member of the public has been quoted yet you manage to include 2/3 paragraphs of my comments made about my views about the 'Big Society', recorded on a different day! Yes, the Oxfordshire library closures and the 'Big Society' debate may well

be linked but you failed to even report on the fact that a meeting took place about local people's concerns in relation to the proposed closure of their local library, and it is that which I take issue with.

As far as I am aware, none of the Oxfordshire libraries are making a bid for the Big Society fund because we feel the all libraries should remain a resource provided by Oxfordshire County Council. At the time of the meeting (26 January 2011) or the interview for BBC Radio 4's Analysis, the Oxfordshire County Council' £600,000.00 'Big Society' fund hadn't even been mentioned, let alone launched! Your main headline above our picture is misleading as it gives the impression that we are interested in bidding for cash to fund local services, namely the Blackbird Leys library and that is not what the meeting was about.

Paula Williams,
local resident and campaigner for
Oxfordshire Libraries; Blackbird
Leys in particular!

Dear Editor,

The Blackbird Leys Parish Council last year agreed to re-establish the Parish Council web site. Brian Lester and Malcolm Anderson were given the task and enlisted the help of Mr Joe Rosa who used to work on the estate to do the technical side. The work is nearly finished. We have produced on the site the Leys Directory where all of the organisations who work on the Leys are listed along with the Community Centre, local schools and sport sites. Please look at your mention to see if the

details are correct. If your organisation is missing please use the contact facility on the site to contact us. There is a short history of Blackbird Leys but as yet nothing about the building of Greater Leys this may follow. We constantly monitor the site. We want more input from residents and make regular updates to the site.

Brian Lester

Dear Editor

In Greater Leys we have a Clockhouse. On top of the Clockhouse we have four clocks. Outside the Clockhouse we have a

bus stop. If you are hoping to catch a bus by looking at the time on ANY of the clocks on the Clockhouse then hope no more. Each one of the clocks shows a different time, and each one is wrong. This has been an ongoing problem for many months now. Will this ever be put right - and who is responsible? Maybe a sun dial would be of more use - providing the sun ever shines!

Jean Denham

Dear Editor,

I always enjoy reading Leys News, so colourful and informative! Living

close by in Littlemore there have been many visits to friends working over the years in Cowley Road Hospital and many visits to meetings in my capacity as County Councillor and Littlemore Parish Councillor between 1997 and 2009.

We can all go along with comments by Rt Rev John Pritchard Bishop of Oxford but to be fair the Prime Minister David Cameron is inexperienced in his new job and needing ideas.

We are in a 'big society' and better to explain as the 'big population' as seen by

coming to London with my parents in 1956 from St Elizabeth in Jamaica-years of change and so exciting in culture and diversity.

In times to come we may be talking about a bigger society, a precursor to the Kingdom of God and that will take a lot of Bible readings to understand God's Kingdom and how to live in it. Better if the Prime Minister renames his Big Society as the Big Population.

Lady Olive McIntosh-
Stedman

DIAMOND CELEBRATION FOR BLACKBIRD PUBLICANS



CHEERS! Betty and John Purcell start their Celebrations.

FOR many couples the thought of working together and living together might be too much of a good thing, but for John and Betty Purcell from Sandhills in Oxford who are celebrating their diamond

wedding anniversary, it is the recipe for a perfect marriage.

John, 87 and Betty 80 whose maiden name was Kilpin, met at The Shelley Arms in Cricket Road, Cowley in 1949 and married two

years later. For eight years they were the landlord and landlady at The Blackbird Pub in Blackbird Leys.

According to John it was most definitely love at first sight. He

said: "I saw her come in the pub and I thought oh yes! I asked her if she fancied a game of darts and that was that!" John had returned to Oxford after serving in the army, and Betty had been to the theatre

with her mother on the night that they met.

The couple lived just round the corner from each other but had never met before. John added: "Betty really was the girl next door but that was the first time I actually met her."

The couple married at the church of St Mary and John in Cowley Road and honeymooned in Bournemouth.

Steve, their son said: "Apparently Dad took a bottle of Port in his suitcase for the wedding night!"

The couple went on to run three of Oxford's most well known pubs and were also local darts champions for a number of years. For 18 months they managed The Corner House in Headington, The Blackbird in Blackbird Leys for eight years and The Ampleforth at Risinghurst where they stayed as licensees for 15 years until John's retirement 25 years ago on his 65th birthday.

Betty said that working with John made her very happy. "John always wanted to run a pub and we really enjoyed it. We liked the pub trade, loved working together and never fell out – we were always far too busy for anything like that! We used to enjoy all the pub games including darts and Aunt Sally."

John, who is the eldest of 12 children, added: "We had a very busy life and have always had a lot of respect for each other. We never fell out and we are still in love after all these years."

Picture courtesy of The Oxford Mail

All aboard for a summer of fun!



THE Dovecote Afloat project sets sail next month and will help children and young people across the Leys.

Narrow boat Biddy's Dream (pictured) has been bought thanks to an Aiming High for Disabled Children capital grant, and is a new innovating project and an exciting, challenging and fun way of introducing

young people to the natural environment.

Carol Richards from The Dovecote said: "The project will make teaching and learning about nature and environmental awareness easier and fun to do. It will open up a completely different side to life for children and young people, which will always be available, but which, ordinarily they may have remained

unaware of.

"The project is designed to give a new and innovative dimension in providing young people on the Leys access to nature. They will have the opportunity to explore Oxfordshire's countryside from a completely different perspective, giving them the opportunity to observe wildlife and the natural environment in a less obtrusive way."

This project has resulted from a need identified by the community for funding an attractive educational and fun play idea for which local funding could not be achieved.

Carol added: "Having the narrow boat will give us the resource to extend the Dovecote from a fixed base play activity centre to one which can offer valuable and innovative learn-

ing experiences for many disadvantaged families, a mobile activity centre and valuable community resource."

Dovecote Afloat is a new, community-led project that will be owned, run, developed and managed by the people whose life's will be enhanced, enriched and make lifelong changes.

Through providing a fun and somewhat different project, Dovecote Afloat aims to ignite a desire within the local community to engage with nature, participate in new ways to learn and to access many new natural habitats and much more.

Biddy's Dream will officially be launched on April 6 and 7.

Friends for 50 years! Continued from frontpage

...Richard Noonan is a relative newcomer to Nunnery Close and moved in seven years ago. He said: "I can really understand why people have stayed here so long and don't want to move. I know that Blackbird Leys has a bad reputation and there can be trouble on other parts of the estate but not here. This is great place to live and we have no problems."

Bernard and Heather Tucker are involved with helping to organise the special birthday celebrations, and Heather has always helped Liz to organise events in the past. She added: "It's the people that make living here so special, our close is really lovely."

Liz added: "We have invited everyone to come and join us on the green after the Royal Wedding and we are hoping to have a really good time. Everyone will do their bit and we will be calling on the younger residents to help put up the bunting!"

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Success for Mind project



THE MILL in Cowley has been given a grant to fund an art project that will help stop the stigma of adult mental illness. The Button Forest installation was the idea of a local artist. It was started early in March by Reg and Kate (pictured) and is a forest of wire trees decorated with donated buttons. The project needs as many buttons as possible to complete the sculpture. If you can help with this appeal please contact Kim Pope on 01865 263758 or email kim.pope@oxfordshire-mind.org.uk

Get healthy with HENRY!

- Are you struggling as a family to develop healthier eating patterns?
- Would you like to do more activity and fun things together as a family?
- Would you like you and your family to feel healthier?

If so, The Leys Children's Centre at Cuddesdon Corner would like to invite you to a Henry taster session on Wednesday April 6 from 9.30am for an hour, in the café area. There will be healthy snacks available and a crèche provided and you will be able to find out about the Henry course we will be running in May and June. HENRY stands for Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young and is an eight week group to help us as families think

about how they can do more fun things together and to think more about how to help children develop healthier eating patterns. Angela Barnett said: "We will also think about ourselves and how we can reduce the stress that family life can bring and that we are all under at times. Do come along on the 4 April to find out more."

For further information and to let us know you want to come do contact either Angela, Children's Centre health visitor, or Debbie Scrivener, Children's Centre outreach worker on 779615.

(The HENRY course runs from Wednesday May 4 until Wednesday 29 June with a break at half term)

ARE you an informal carer?

THE ANSWER is yes if you are caring for your partner, or another family member or friend. Perhaps they have a chronic health condition or disability, and need some help to manage day-to-day. Or maybe you are supporting an older relative who relies on you.

Carers can sometimes feel isolated, and drained by all the demands on them. It can be hard to

make time for yourself.

Leys CDI Clockhouse Project is launching a new monthly informal support group for carers, based at the Clockhouse Community Centre, Long Ground, Greater Leys. The group's first meeting is on Monday 11 April 2-3.30 pm. All local carers are warmly invited to meet and chat over a cup of tea, make new friends, and share advice, information and experience.

The group is supported by Oxfordshire County Council and in the future will meet every third Monday in the month.

For more details, contact Sally Meachim on 01865 395908.

THE BLACKBIRD LEYS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Moving forward at the Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre

THE Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre (BBLCC) has been providing a valuable resource for the community for many years. In the past the centre was governed by a Community Association but this effectively disbanded a few years ago. We feel that it is important for the residents of the 'Leys' (Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys), to get involved in the running of their Community Centre again. An interim Steering Group has been overseeing the process of establishing a new Community Association whose members are:

- Paula Williams - Office Administrator for Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre
- Rebecca Wrigley - Team Leader, Communities and Neighbourhoods, Oxford City Council
- Councillor Val Smith - Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council

members and trustees of the new Community Association. We hope that the Association will reflect the range of ages, diversities and skills we have in our community."

If you interested please contact Paula Williams on 01865 402070 bblca@btconnect.com

There will be a Public Meeting on May 19 to discuss the plans and invite people to become members. So read the next edition of Leys News for more information!

ROYAL WEDDING PLANS

The Blackbird Leys Community Association is planning a Royal Wedding Event

Open Day event on 29 April from 10am – 4pm.

AS WELL as screening the Royal Wedding, the event is a chance to engage with the community about what's going on at the Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre and discuss the formation of the new community association and how to get involved. There will also be fun activities and information sharing during the day.

Community groups from across the Leys are invited to have information stalls to promote their work and volunteers are also needed to help on the day.

To help with planning the event, or to help on the day, please contact Paula Williams Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre on 01865 402070 or bblca@btconnect.com

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SIMPLY FUNDRAISING: GIVING FROM LIVING

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AS GOVERNMENT plans to create a Big Society and encourage more volunteering gather speed, many third sector organisations are struggling with cuts to their funding and need to find new ways to generate cash.

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donations every time a card holder makes a purchase with a participating retailer.

Simply Fundraising was established in 2010 to provide a new, innovative and above all, simple, way for any cause in the UK to raise extra funds for free.

There are now over 40 participating retailers in the scheme including many household names, such as ASDA, Argos, B&Q, Comet,

Debenhams, M&S, Sainsbury's and Homebase. Retailers pay between two and 3.25% of spend to causes. New participating Partners are joining each month.

Community Advocate for Simply Fundraising, David Potter, said: "Let's say a supporter does their main food shopping with a participating retailer, such as ASDA, M&S or Sainsbury, and spends £250 a month, and they also buy other items like clothes, gifts, books, CD/DVD plus occasionally white and brown goods, from participating retailers. This could give a average spend of around £400 per month."

"The cause would receive on average 2.5% of that spend equivalent to £10.00 per month or £120 per year. Therefore, 100 Supporters could produce £12,000 per year, year on year.

"In addition, supporters also benefit as they earn points towards free flights. A real win-win situation."

For more information about Simplyfundraising contact davidpotter@simplyfundraising.co.uk or visit www.simplyfundraising.co.uk to apply for your own debit card and on joining quote Promotion Code OX001

Bullying story strikes a chord

LEYS NEWS Community Journalist Naomi Abitabile speaks to a parent from the Leys about their reaction to last month's special feature on bullying. We have agreed not to identify the parent at their request.

"When I was young, the three tier school system was used, nowadays they use only two. So basically, my 11-year-old son came from hop-scotch and kiss chase in the 'playground' to an environment of back-chatting teens and inappropriate behaviour. The thought frightened me to death. However, I knew it was a natural feeling to have as a parent and we have to learn to accept it and stay positive for our children – despite knowing how nervous they feel and that problems could arise at anytime.

"That 'time' came much sooner than I imagined. Five months in upper school and I receive a phone call at work from the year 7 mentor, telling me "there has been an incident" My son had been targeted. My son and three of his 11-year-old friends were running through the (what I might now call) 'hellground' where five 13 and 14-year-old boys were also stood. One of them tripped my son over, resulting in him cutting his knee open and shouting at them in frustration that they were idiots. Oh and what consequences that had! The boys did not like my son's reaction to this and fortunately my son recognised this and moved quickly despite his bad

knee and ran to his year 7 block in search for safety. The school reassured me that he was in safe hands and indeed made sure he wasn't left alone for the rest of the day and asked my son to identify the boys. At first my son felt reluctant to do this as he didn't want to risk the boys doing something worse to him but fortunately his friends were prepared to identify them and this made him feel more at ease knowing he wasn't alone in 'telling on them'.

"Once home with me, I didn't want to let him out of my sight, just looking at his knee made me feel sick to my stomach-someone hurting 'my baby', 'my little boy' and knowing a Transformer design plaster and an ice-cream wasn't going to comfort him this time. I felt so helpless. For the rest of the week I walked my son to and from school and he too was kept indoors at break and lunch times, while the older boys were allowed out. However, I believe the boys got wind of this information and plotted to make contact with my son before he could reach the school gates to meet me, as three of the boys bundled him. One grabbing his hair, another pushing him to the floor, while the other kicked him, then

quickly leaving him on the floor when they caught view of a teacher. When hearing this I cried, through sheer anger and despair. The feeling of dread ran through me and my hands felt tied-there was nothing more I could do, it was out of my control. It was the anger and frustration I had that kept me determined-determined that these boys were not going to get away with this.

"So what is being done about this"? I asked the year 7 mentor. And her response was "I have notified the year 9 mentor and I'm waiting for her to get back to me" I couldn't believe what I was hearing why was this situation, three days after the first incident not being properly investigated? And at this point I demanded that I wanted it sorted and I wanted it sorted today! Thankfully this attitude seemed to work and the boys were called in and made to apologise to my son and instead of having a day off school through exclusion, had to face consequences for their actions-punishment the school deemed appropriate.

My son still gets the occasional look and comment thrown his way and I am in the process of 'nipping this in the bud' before it could get worse.

Every day he goes to school I worry that there may be another incident with the same boys or someone else and I have to place my trust with the school. I pray that if it happens again he won't keep it to himself and try and deal with the situation alone. My heart goes out to any parents that have experienced what I have and to any child that may be a victim of bullying."

Eating out...with John Charlton

Red Lion

14 Gloucester Street, Oxford,

THE NEWLY refurbished Red Lion opened on Friday 25 February, and accepting an invitation to sample the menu and check out the decor we headed down to try it out. The last time we were in this pub it was called the Goose and was a drinking den for the younger element in Oxford. How things have changed!

The pub now caters for the restaurant market and its tastefully designed interior does create a lovely atmosphere for dining out. The staff were incredibly attentive and keen to ensure we enjoyed our evening. There is a wide range of

dishes and a small daily selection of the Chef's specials. I chose the stilton and pear tart for starters followed by duck on a cheese mash. My partner started with scallops followed by pork in coffee and lime. Of course I couldn't resist having a taste of the pork and yes, the flavour of coffee was quite strong but not overpowering. If you want something a little bit different then give this dish a try, it really was very tasty.

The general feel of the pub is very cool and if you want to eat out with a buzz, this is the place to go. Groovy music, lots of busy chatter and a great place to meet. I think we will be making a return visit.

FREE Family Friendly Fun



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- ★ Free activity backpacks, trails and much more every Sunday – 2-4pm.
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Pitt Rivers Museum – Tel: 01865 270927

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Are you over 50?

**Try something new
at the Clockhouse
this Spring!**

Clockhouse Community Centre

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**Activities, Fun and Friendship
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Perfect Pumpkins and Super Squashes

By Leah Owens

OKAY EVERYONE, I promised you pumpkins and pumpkins it is. Well, pumpkins and squashes to be precise – although I'm still not entirely sure what the difference is. I think it's something to do with the fact that pumpkins are the ones that have a hard skin and need a bit of ripening in the sunshine in autumn, when they are harvested, and squashes are the thin skinned summer vegetables like courgettes and patty pans.

Patty pans? They're the incredible flying saucer shaped squashes of golden yellow and pale green – slightly denser fleshed than courgettes and nuttier tasting. I love them.

Pumpkins and squashes are members of the curcubit family, which also includes cucumbers. If you look at the seeds you'll see how similar they look – like pale teardrops. They're big seeds and once the seedlings are up and out of their pots on a sunny windowsill they really do go berserk, so unless you've got a field sized garden sow sparingly. As my garden is so small I've started growing varieties that I can train upwards on a frame. They also do really well individually, in biggish tubs.

I start off by pushing one seed, on its side, into a 5" diameter pot filled with sieved compost. Water and stand in a drip tray on a sunny windowsill. The first



two leaves will be oval shaped and are not 'true' leaves. True leaves are wide and remind me of small rhubarb leaves, but they'll soon look like trifids believe me. You'll know when it's time to repot them in their final growing place! Make sure you add plenty of manure at the bottom of the planting hole as they are greedy feeders.

This year I'm sowing 'Sunburst' patty pan and 'Striato d'Italia' seeds and growing on a 'Buckingham' yellow courgette (see pic), that I bought in a tiny thimble sized pot from B&Q for 30p. It's romped away since I got it home and I had to repot it within a week!

The pumpkins I'm sowing this year are 'Uchiki Kuri' -

onion shaped and nutty flavoured, 'Kabochi' and 'Crown Prince' – both from saved seed; both delicious, and I'm growing on a butternut squash – another 30p B&Q bargain.

If you want yours to climb to save ground space for other things, then look for the smaller fruiting varieties. Uchiki Kuri is about as big as you can go. Kabochi and Crown Prince (big, heavy fruits), should be repotted into big tubs containing lots of manure and compost – one plant in each – or into the ground, as soon as the threat of frost is over (towards the end of May). If they get too big to keep indoors, and you have to put them out earlier, then make sure you listen to the weather forecast and

cover them up at night. They will easily die if bitten by frost.

Of course, what we need for a good crop is lots and lots of lovely sunshine, as well as regular feeding. Some people swear by tomato feed, others by chicken pellets and I've just been reading about dried blood being good for cucumbers, so I figure it's probably good for pumpkins too. You can buy it from gardening stores – no midnight sacrifices needed! Send us a photo of your successful specimens and we'll publish pictures of your perfect pumpkins in our October issue – just in time for Halloween!

Green Fingers

By Stuart Mabbutt



Wood Anenomes

TAKE A WALK in any deciduous woodland at this time of year and you will often see Wood Anenomes growing strongly.

This is an aspect of Mother Nature that we can bring into our own gardens. We don't need a deciduous wood in our garden, merely a large deciduous shrub under which you can plant some of your own Anenomes.



They are simple to grow as they spread quickly, as long as you give them moist rich soil in light shade under shrubs. As long as the shrub under which you plant them offers shade in the hot summer, they will grow readily for you. Just mulch with a one inch deep of well rotted compost each winter, and they will do the rest.

Anemone Nemorosa is our own Wild Anemone you see out there in local woods, they are almost always white and flower between March and April, May in some years. Anemone Ranunculoides is another wild type, found across Europe, but has vivid yellow flowers in April.



Don't go digging them up from the wild though; there are plenty of suppliers that produce them sensitively without destroying the countryside. British Trust for Conservation Volunteers is a good example. This is a great time of year to get inspiration from Mother Nature for our own gardens, so get out there and take a look at this free resource. Before they sell off all the woodlands of course!

HAPPY GARDENING.

SPECIAL LEYS NEWS GARDENING OFFER!

Leys News has teamed up with Suttons Seeds to offer all our readers the chance to buy three Verbena Lollipop plants for just £9.99 including P&P.



Enjoy the incredible clusters of lavender flowers on low-growing, mound-like plants. It's low-maintenance, drought tolerant and ideal for cutting. Height 60cm (24").

Dispatch will be in early May. Closing date is the end of April 2011. All orders to be sent to: Leys News Offer (LN411), Woodview Road, Paignton, Devon, TQ4 7NG. Order by phone 0844 922 0606 quoting LN411 or online. Offer also available on www.suttons.co.uk/LN411

COMPETITION CORNER

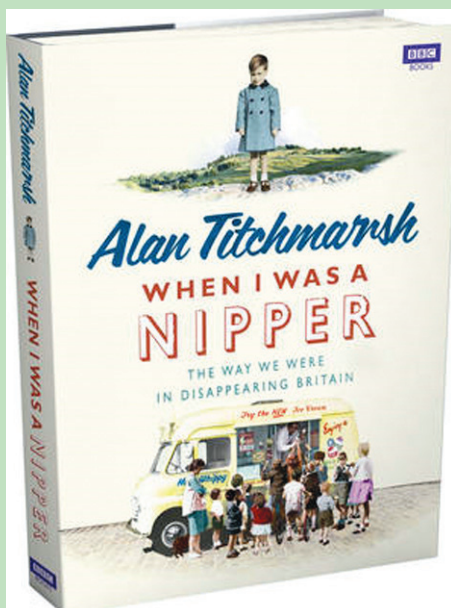
HERE is your chance to win a copy of *When I was a Nipper* by celebrity TV gardener Alan Titchmarsh. Simply answer this question:

Who writes the Leys News Green Fingers column?

Send your answer to: Gardening Competition, Leys News 26, Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys, Oxford OX4 7BX.

Or email us editor@leysnews.co.uk

All entries must arrive by the closing date of April 15 and usual terms and conditions apply. Please make sure you include your full name, address and contact number.



Have you just taken on an allotment on The Leys?

WE'RE LOOKING for a novice "allotmenteer" to feature each month in Leys News. We'll track your progress across the seasons for a year and hope to encourage the full take-up of allotments in the area.

Contact: Sarah on 01865 711756 editor@leysnews.co.uk

Easter events for the family

Tuesday, 5 April
Oxford Gospel Choir Easter Concert
7.30pm, Wesley Memorial Church New Inn Hall Road
Oxford, Oxfordshire, UK OX1 2DH. Tickets available on the door, call 07519 668137 for more information
www.oxfordgospelchoir.co.uk

9 - 10 April
The Big Easter Bunny Hunt Waterperry Gardens
Find the bunnies hidden in the gardens and win a prize.
email: events@waterperrygardens.co.uk
Tel. 01844 339226
10am – 5.30pm. £2 per child.
Waterperry Gardens, Nr. Wheatley, Oxon. OX33 1JZ.
Open: April-Oct 10-5.30; Nov-Mar 10am – 5pm;
Tel. 01844 339254
www.waterperrygardens.co.uk

Easter Trail
Eggsplare the Oxford Museums with an eggciting egg-hunter's trail.
Free, all day throughout the Easter holidays
Pitt Rivers Museum, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PP;
Email: prm@prm.ox.ac.uk;
Tel. 01865 270927
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/events.html

22 April
The Great Easter Egg Challenge
Join the ninth annual Easter Challenge at the Pleasure Gardens. Complete the hunt and you will receive a prize. Egg decorating and bunny and tortoise colouring shapes will be available too!
www.blenheimpalace.com
10.30am-4.30pm, £11; Con-£8; Ch-£5.50; Fam-£28
Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxford; Tel. 01993 811325.
www.blenheimpalace.com

25 April
Peppa Pig Comes to Blenheim
The stars of the BAFTA Award winning TV programmes Peppa Pig and George from series "Peppa Pig", as well as Ben and Holly from "Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom" are coming to families at the Pleasure Gardens on Easter Sunday and Monday!
www.blenheimpalace.com
10.30am-4.30pm. Admission: £11; Con. £8; Ch £5.50; Family £28
Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxford; Tel. 01993 811325
www.blenheimpalace.com

Having an egg-citing Easter with our great competition!

FINALLY (and hopefully!) the miserable damp and cold days of winter are behind us and we can all look forward to some sunny spring weather and the chance to get outside and enjoy the fresh air!

With the Easter holidays not far away, this the perfect time of year to get outside and start looking for signs of spring. Birds will be singing and flowers and plants will be unfurling their leaves and shoots ready to burst into colour at the first sign of a sunny day.

A sunny spring day is also an ideal opportunity to organise an Easter egg hunt for your family and friends-and even if the weather isn't fantastic you can always have your egg hunt indoors instead.

Get a group of friends together and ask everyone to contribute to your event by donating a few small chocolate eggs. There is no need to spend lots of money as the supermarkets all have some brilliant Easter egg bargains at the moment and you can probably find a bag containing quite a few foil wrapped eggs for just a few pounds.

Then you need to get busy making clues to hide either in the garden or your house. If you belong to a youth or community group then maybe you could ask your leader to organise an egg hunt. Schools, pre schools and toddler groups also often hold their own Easter events to raise funds so find out if there are any other egg hunts happening in your area.

Clues can be simple pieces of coloured paper containing cryptic or simple clues leading to various secret places where the chocolate eggs have been hidden. You can also make some paper baskets for collecting the eggs, and if you are feeling particularly



creative why not make some fun Easter bonnets as well?

To get your Easter activities off to a flying start, Leys News has teamed up with our lovely friends at Wilkinsons to give you the chance to win £30 worth of fantastic spring craft goodies! To win this great prize, just answer this simple question:

What is the date of Easter Sunday?

Please send your answers to:
Leys News, Easter competition, 26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys, Oxford OX4 7BX.
Or email us at editor@leysnews.co.uk
The closing date is Wednesday 6 April. Usual terms and conditions apply and no correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final.

Kid's easter fun and Games

Easter Jokes

What do you get if you pour hot water down a rabbit hole?
Hot cross bunnies!

Where does the Easter Bunny go if he needs a new tail?
A re-tail store!

How do bunnies stay in shape?
With hareobics.

Why did the easter egg hide?
He was a little chicken!

Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke?
It might crack up!

How do you catch a rabbit?
Make a noise like a carrot!

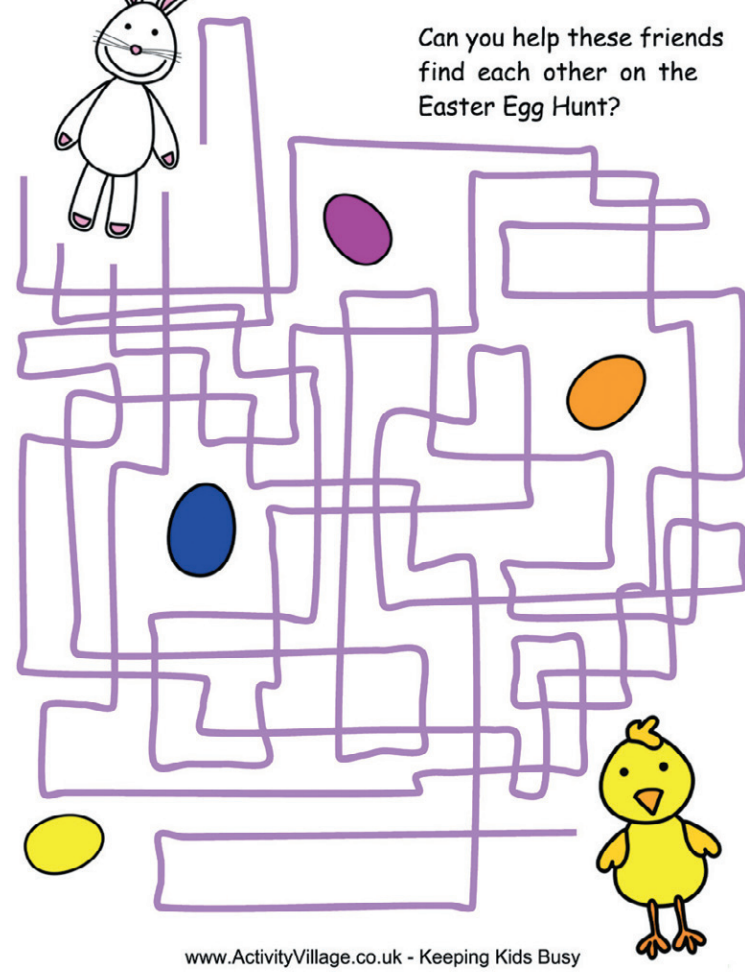
Why did the Easter Bunny have to fire the duck?
Because he kept quacking all the eggs!

How did the soggy Bunny dry himself?
With a hare-dryer!

Why did the Easter Bunny cross the road?
To prove he wasn't chicken!

What do you call a dumb bunny?
A hare brain!

Easter Puzzle



Easter Word Search

r	o	f	l	o	w	e	r	s	l	y	q
x	h	h	m	b	u	e	b	p	i	y	b
d	t	w	u	u	b	a	s	k	e	t	w
a	c	c	f	n	e	b	o	n	n	e	t
f	a	h	s	n	t	g	z	x	h	j	c
f	e	o	i	y	v	w	g	f	o	b	s
o	a	c	a	c	y	p	b	m	f	n	g
d	s	o	w	r	k	l	a	f	p	u	g
i	t	l	j	k	t	s	b	r	k	u	k
l	e	a	f	j	e	r	m	e	a	r	k
h	r	t	a	s	u	n	d	a	y	d	c
b	m	e	s	p	r	i	n	g	k	g	e

easter	basket	parade	chocolate
sunday	bonnet	hunt	
bunny	spring	flowers	
egg	chicks	daffodil	

www.ActivityVillage.co.uk

Christian Life Centre, Oxford

WOMEN OF PURPOSE CONFERENCE

theme:

God's Daughters

arise!

15-16 April 2011

Venue: 49 Oxford Road,
Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2ER
Tel: 01865 772152

email: adminclc@btconnect.com
www.christianlifecentreoxford.org.uk

Speakers:

Dionne M. Lamont
Anita Cleverly
Cindy Reid (Host Pastor)

Attractions:

Praise and Worship
The Chill Out Room
The Shop
Free Massage /Manicure

Parking and Disabled
Facilities as well as Children
and Creche available.

Guest Artistes:

Lara Martin (Gifted songwriter and worship leader)
Anointed Praise

ADMISSION IS FREE

Hot Cross buns!

THE HOT CROSS BUN is a yeast - leavened, spiced bun marked with a cross on the top. It often contains raisins and sometimes candied peel. They have a long history, with many different superstitions attached to them. The earliest hot cross bun was possibly made by the Greeks, but in modern day Christian traditions are usually eaten hot or toasted on Good Friday, with the cross standing as a symbol of the Crucifixion. However, you can eat them all year round as well - tasty! Did you know... English folklore says that buns baked and served on Good Friday will not spoil or become mouldy during the subsequent year? Or that sharing a hot cross bun with another is supposed to ensure

friendship throughout the coming year? Perhaps it's worth remembering as we start thinking about heading off for our summer holidays that if taken on a sea voyage, hot cross buns are said to protect against shipwreck...

Make your own Hot Cross Buns

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour
1 cakes fresh yeast
1 cup milk
4 teaspoons water
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg, grated
1 egg beaten
1/4 cup melted butter
1 cup currants

Procedure

1. Heat milk and water to lukewarm.

2. Crumble yeast. Mix with 1/2 cup flour. Stir in tepid milk/water and mix well.

3. Cover and set aside in warm place until yeast is active and frothing, about 10 - 15 minutes.

4. Mix remaining flour, sugar, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg.

5. Stir egg and butter into the yeast mix, add the flour mixture and fruit. Mix well.

6. Put dough onto a floured surface and knead. Return to bowl, and let rise until double in bulk, about 1 hour.

7. Turn onto a floured surface and knead again.

8. Preheat oven to 375 F (190 C).

9. Divide dough into twelve pieces and shape into buns. Mark a deep cross on the top of each bun.

10. Arrange on a baking tray, cover with tea towel, and let rise for 30 minutes. Cook in preheated 375 degree Fahrenheit (190 Celsius) oven for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Glaze

1. Mix together sugar, butter, milk and vanilla.

2. Remove buns from tray and glaze.

Enjoy!

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Cookbook:Hot_Cross_Bun

Children's Page

ARE you a budding artist, photographer or writer? If so then we want to hear from you! Leys News is always keen to publish any creative work from our younger readers, and our favourite pictures, drawings, photographs, stories or poems (or even jokes...but they have to be REALLY funny!) will win a prize.

Send your work, copies are fine, to us at the usual address and watch this space...it could be filled with your best work of art next time!

Animal Word Search

Rabbit
Pig
Cow
Chicken
Hamster
Horse
Cat
Dog
Sheep
Parrot



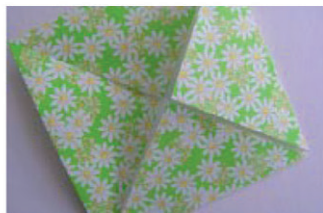
r s e a p i g y m h
b a e c o h d e p a
n v b t c r o m r m
e d i b h n g q t s
z t e s i a u b h t
h o c i c t d j o e
y r w u k l g o r r
j r s h e e p k s g
c a t p n k o l e w
l p x v a c o w g q

Make an Origami Box

This little origami box is useful for storing all sorts of treasures - and it is great fun to fold too. Once you have mastered the technique you will be wanting to fold boxes of all shapes, sizes and colours!
If you fold a second box with a slightly bigger square of paper, you can use it as a lid.



1. Fold your origami square in half horizontally and then in half vertically, to make the creases as shown above.



2. Fold the four corners carefully into the center, creasing well.



3. Fold two sides into the centre as shown, again creasing well.



4. Open out to the point shown above.



5. Fold the sides into the center, creasing well.



6. Look at the dotted lines in the photo above. You must crease the model first along one of the lines



7. like this. Now open the model out again and crease along the other line ..



8. like this. Be sure to press the creases really well.



9. Now do the same at the other end, pressing first one way ..



10. then the other.



11. Now open out most of the model and begin to form it into its final shape, pinching and encouraging as you go. Each end will fold over itself and back inside, forming a perfect little box!



www.ActivityVillage.co.uk

The Adventures of Bertha the Bus: Part 2

BERTHA has a race

ONE SATURDAY, Bertha was waiting in the Bus Station in Milltown, when a big white coach called Christabel came in. Christabel was very white and very clean, and Bertha started worrying as soon as she saw her. Bertha knew she must be a bit muddy after the twenty-mile run from Longhampton; would it show? Bertha sat there looking very unhappy with herself.

Christabel's Driver took her to the very next rank to Bertha (places for buses to park are called "ranks", in case you didn't know), and stopped. He got out and went to the back to get out the passengers' suitcases. Then the passengers started getting out. Bertha thought they looked very well-dressed; not a bit like her own passengers! Then she noticed the sign on Christabel's front, which said "7-Day Tour of Britain".

The passengers had got out and found their suitcases by now, and they were walking across to what looked like a very big house, with a sign saying "GRAND HOTEL". Bertha had noticed

this building before, but she had never asked Fred what it was for. Fred had gone to the café to get a cup of tea, and Bertha could see him just starting to walk back.

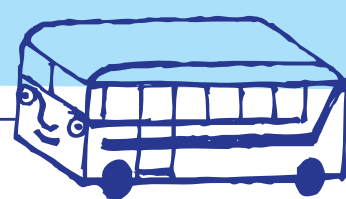
"What's a hotel?" Bertha whispered to Christabel.

Christabel looked startled, as if she didn't know that ordinary country buses like Bertha could talk. "A hotel, my dear, is a kind of garage for people. Much more comfortable than our garages! They don't have to be hosed down or have horrible buckets of cold water thrown in their faces, for one thing. They have things called baths, where they can lie down and cover themselves with hot water".

"If I covered myself with hot water, I'd rust terribly" said Bertha.

Christabel was talking very loudly and in a very posh accent.

Bertha had already decided she wasn't going to like her. Christabel pretended she hadn't heard Bertha's remark.



Driver Fred hadn't remembered to top up her radiator, she would have boiled.

"Of course, my dear" said Christabel, not noticing how angry Bertha looked, "express coaches like me are always going long distances. And the speeds! All the way from London we've been doing seventy miles an hour. If my Driver had tried a little harder we could have done ninety."

"He would have been booked by the police, and serve you right!" said Bertha, finding her voice at last. Christabel looked very snooty indeed. "Well, my dear, I'm sure you'd never get booked for speeding", she said. "The cheek of it!" said Bertha. "I'm just as fast as the next bus!" "Yes, maybe" replied Christabel, "but not as fast as the next coach".

Fred had returned with his cup of tea by now. He was getting on board Bertha to drink his tea, then he was going to have a nice little nap on the back seat. He had heard Bertha and Christabel arguing.

"All right" said Bertha to Christabel. "I'll race you to my garage and back". Bertha saw Christabel's eyes light up. "You're on!" shouted Christabel, and Bertha noticed that when Christabel got excited, she didn't speak with quite such

a posh accent.

Christabel tooted her horn for her Driver to come back. It was a very snazzy three-tone horn; toot-toot-TOOT!, it went. It made Bertha feel even angrier. She could only toot on one note. Why did these flashy coaches get all the luck?

Fred knew that there would be no nap for him now. But he was really happy. "Good girl!" he said quietly to Bertha. "We'll show this city slicker a thing or two!" Bertha smiled. By now Christabel's Driver had climbed back on board. He knew he wasn't going to be wanted until the next morning, and he was all for a bit of a lark.

"Where is this garage of yours, my dear?" asked Christabel. She had gone back to speaking posh. "It's in Longhampton village, just off the Eastway road" replied Bertha. She was just a little frightened by now. Wouldn't it be awful if Christabel did win the race? Carrie and Derek would never speak to Bertha again.

Christabel's Driver opened a big road map. "Ah yes", he said, "Longhampton". Fred didn't need a map; he knew every little lane round here, and so did Bertha.

Who is going to win the race? Follow Bertha in "Leys News" next month!

LONGHAMPTON



Your 'Front Room' in the University Museums



A HEADSPACE FOR TEENAGERS: art student Emily at the Natural History Museum

By Jane Yates

ADRIAN BROOKS, the Art Education Officer for the Oxford Museums, realised that GCSE and A level art and textile students can find it hard to find a quiet space to study for their exams. Adrian provided a temporary 'front room' in museums around the city with a relaxed environment, background music, refreshments and the equipment needed to create wonderful pieces of course work. Students used a range of

media from digital cameras to more traditional tools such as paper and paint.

The event was held for three days and covered four of the Oxford museums, The Ashmolean, The Museum of History of Science, The Natural History Museum and the Pitt Rivers.

These Museums are all richly filled and beautifully displayed, and Adrian and his small team of volunteers are knowledgeable about the collections. Students were

introduced to objects that were relevant to their individual projects.

Adrian nurtures and encourages the students in such a way that they are truly inspired and create quite advanced work for their courses.

A range of students attended from as far afield as Didcot and Milton Keynes and all found the experience to be valuable and rewarding.

Below is just what four of the students said about their experience:

Bonita - 'I really enjoyed it! It inspired me for my course'.

Emily - 'I found it enjoyable, enlightening and educational'.

Moria - 'It help to build my portfolio for my Art Foundation Course interview and exam.'

Emily - 'It was really helpful to find a start point for my topic'.

The Art Resource will be running again next Spring break. Information can be found on the Museums websites or by ringing Adrian Brooks directly on 01865 282456

News from BLITZ

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Can you use a computer?
Could you help others learn?



A TUTOR leads our beginner's classes and we are looking for assistants. This involves going round the room, helping adult students one-to-one. You don't need to be a computer whiz, just comfortable with word processing, using the internet and email. You also need to be patient and encouraging.



If you can spare a couple of hours each week and think you could help, call John Clifford on 01865 714492.

NEW DROP IN TIMES

Free access to the internet for adults:

Mondays: 12.30 – 3.00pm

Wednesdays: 12.30 – 3.00pm

Fridays: 10.00am – 3.00pm

Sponsored by Oxford Brookes University



The Blackbird Leys IT Hub

Ring John on 01865 714492

or email blitzithub@yahoo.co.uk for further details. Or visit him during office hours at the Leys Community Centre, Blackbird Leys Road.

In a different light

Friday 13 May, 6 – 10pm

Enjoy the atmosphere and collections of the Pitt Rivers Museum and Oxford University Museum of Natural History at our spectacular free late night event.

This award-winning event will feature live bands, world music and a chance to explore the Pitt Rivers by torchlight.

This year the museum will also be hosting a 'Future Shorts' screening of innovative short films from up-and-coming directors.

All this and more will offer a great evening for all your friends and family.

Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford
South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PP
www.prm.ox.ac.uk
P: 01865 613017

COURSES, WORKSHOPS, OPPORTUNITIES

RUSKIN COLLEGE

FOR THOSE considering entering into higher education at Ruskin College, the next HEAD day (Higher Education Access Day) at Ruskin will be on Friday 27 May, from 11am – 3pm.

Attending a HEAD Day will enable you to make a fully informed decision on whether you would like to apply for a place at Ruskin College.

If you would like to attend a HEAD Day you should book a place by ringing Hannah on 01865 517832.

ALSO AT RUSKIN, are Open Mornings for those interested in learning more about the lifelong learning short courses Ruskin runs. The next one will be on 8 April, from 10am – 2pm at our Walton Street site.

Please call 01865 759656 to book a place.

POSTGRADUATE FAIR

THE Oxford Brookes University Postgraduate Fair takes place on April 6 from 4pm until 6pm.

It is a great opportunity for prospective and current students to talk informally with staff from the university's academic schools and learn more about Oxford Brookes taught postgraduate programmes and preparatory courses.

The Fair will take place in the Buckley Building, Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane site. Campus tours will be available from 4pm.

For more information email pgt-admin@brookes.ac.uk or ring 01865 483713.

BACK TO WORK

Scout Enterprises provides FREE training to help people get back to work.

The training, which is available at Blackbird Leys Community centre, helps with everything from applying for jobs to interview technique, basic IT skills and confidence building.

For more info ring 01865 395544.

Able Centre

FREE courses in Maths and English

Improve your skills and get a recognised qualification. Able Centre, Blackbird Leys Library.

Tel: 01865 776334, to book a time to come in.

The Leys Scarecrow Competition

Sunday 26 June

ENTRY FORM

**The Leys Scarecrow Competition entry form
Sunday 26 June 2011**

Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms

Address

Post code

Phone

mobile

Email

Name of Group planning to enter (eg *Kingfisher Angling club, name of school, road or flats or business / service supplier*)

If an individual, please tick here ☐

Caption (to be included on the Trail map) of no more than seven words:

Category: under 12 ☐ all-comers ☐

Please return by Monday 16 May together with returnable deposit of £5 (cheques to be made payable to Church of the Holy Family)

Return form either to: Church of Holy Family, 1 Cuddesdon Road; Russ and Sue Price 190 Pegasus Rd; or Adam Stevenson, 8 Fry's Hill.



FOLLOWING STORIES in the last two issues of Leys News various local organisations have already expressed interest in the Leys Scarecrow Competition, organised by the Church of Holy Family. Now is the time for you to commit to making a scarecrow. Do it yourself, with your family or link up with other people who live or work on the Leys. You'll have a chance of winning one of several cash prizes.

Leys News will publish a map of the Leys Scarecrow Trail in its June issue which is delivered to every home on the Leys. To feature on the Trail your scarecrow entry will need to be received by Monday 16 May.

Watch out for the May issue of Leys News where we will provide handy suggestions on making a scarecrow and information about how to access free chicken wire and straw.

How to enter:

- Decide which section you will enter, either 'under 12's or 'all comers.'
- Work out a caption (of up to seven words) you want to use with your scarecrow.
- Fill out the form below and send it to the Church of the Holy Family or 190 Pegasus Road.
- Enclose a £5 returnable deposit (to demonstrate your commitment). Make any cheques to 'Church of the Holy Family'. You will receive a receipt and the deposit will be returned - when the scarecrows are judged.

Leys Poetry Corner

Clever Whenever

by Danny Williams

It's not too late have you heard of rebate, you cannot slow the great, even when coming through late.

You should crave and elate, these words are not fake, are not fictitious, not glorious but victorious.

Spitting and hitting the bones in your ears, bring the tone to your ears, up changing the gears.

The gears are of speed and paced, in this most rapid race, and reflect the gravity and disgrace, in these most ravaged of days.

Knife crimes, gun crimes, war mongers, the deprived and their hungers.

Arms deals, unfair legislations and the poorest denied a proper education.

Rising fuel and rising bills, when grocery shopping people feel their money is dropping, you and I aren't hopping.

Where's the fun, things here can be so glum, if you are in permanent work, the years you give mean that your life is booked.

But life itself is a wonderful thing, beating heart, red blood flows within.

Engaging your brain in genius and grins, enjoy what you have but try not to sin.

Try to elate, keep your life straight, try to engage, try not to enrage, it's never too late; take your piece of the cake.

Dovecote Easter Playscheme

Priority is given to families from The Leys



**Monday 11th April until Thursday 14th April
Monday 18th April until Thursday 21st April**

10am until 4pm

**£20 per week per child concession,
plus trip money**

**£25 per day per child
if pre-booked for child care, plus trip costs**

TRIPS

**WEEK 1: Drayton Manor,
£21.50 per child, £25 per adult**

**WEEK 2: Youlbury Scout Camp,
with planned activities, £15 per child**

**Registration day will be held
at the Dovecote Centre
Friday 1st April at 9.15am**



NEW Dovecote Project

Biddy's Dream



Dovecote Afloat

For 8 to 14-year-olds

Starts April 2011

Dovecote Afloat will run alongside our current playschemes

Children can be signed up to attend our centre based scheme for one week Easter or 2 weeks summer, and/or Dovecote Afloat for one week Easter, 2 weeks summer

*Cost will be £20.00 per week per child **pre-booked child care costs £25 per day***

10am until 4pm Easter

10am until 3pm summer

Children will be transported to boat by a fully qualified mini bus driver free of charge

Thanks to an Aiming High grant we have purchased a second hand narrow boat.

The boat has room to do on board activities young people will have the opportunity to enjoy a variety of activities and opportunities along the Oxford canal and or the Thames tow paths.

Time spent in the natural world promotes a positive outlook on life; it enhances and promotes children's understanding and ability to make positive changes to benefit the environment and wildlife.

Example of activities, children will have the opportunity to access;

- Scavenge hunting, collecting materials to make collages, models, etc
- Wombling i.e. identify and removing litter, hazards dangerous to environment and wildlife.
- Creating homes for wildlife

This new exciting project will provide young people with many new, challenging, fun activities and opportunities

Arts and Culture Focus

BLACKBIRD LEYS WONDERLAND

Review by David Potter

I WAS invited to join a group of friends to see the Oxfordshire Theatre Company's Alice in Wonderland at the Barn in Blackbird Leys part sponsored by Catalyst Communities Housing Association.

I have to admit that I was not particularly looking forward to the event. When I realised that there were only three people in the cast playing 13 parts, I thought my worst fears were about to be realised. How wrong can one be!

It turned out to be a magical evening in Wonderland thanks to the professionalism of the whole company and performances of the versatile cast of Peter Gardner, Kate Scott and Ami Stidolph that brought the story to life with imaginative use of props and a fantasy set created by Rebecca Lee.

Particular mention should be made of the excellent singing by the cast of songs that were used to link the parts of the



performance together.

Although a professional touring company, the way in which they had converted the Barn into a theatre was brilliant.

The audience covered the

whole range of family ages and while the younger children were enthralled and enthusiastic supporters, and would be participants, of the various characters and scenes, the

remainder of the audience were drawn into the magic of the performance and a good time was had by all.

CELEBRATE MAY MORNING!

MAY MORNING in Oxford is a traditional celebration of the coming of Spring and brings together Oxford's communities to enjoy dancing, singing and revelry from around the city.

The celebrations start, as they do every year, at 6am with the choristers of Magdalen College choir singing the traditional hymn, Hymnus Eucharisticus, from the Great Tower.

This year Magdalen Bridge will be open to pedestrians and closed to traffic to enable everyone to enjoy the singing in comfort and safety. Other events and activities will include Morris dancing in Radcliffe Square and Cattle Street, and live music in Broad Street.

Many pubs, bars and restaurants across the city will open from 6.00am for breakfast including eateries in the city centre, Jericho and East Oxford. There will also be food and activities at city centre cultural venues including The Ashmolean Museum and the Oxford Castle.

Rachel Capell, City Events and International Links Officer at Oxford City Council, said: "This year's celebration of



May Morning is about opening up the city so everyone can take part in the event together, in a safe and enjoyable environment. For many years, Magdalen Bridge, has been a focus of attention and we want to celebrate the whole city and everything that is traditional about May Morning. May Morning has always been led by the people of Oxford and is about everyone joining in the fun."

The Oxford Castle will have special performances throughout the day from six traditional street organ grinders or you can relax within the surroundings of Oxford Castle's site and enjoy breakfast or dinner at one of the restaurants on the complex.

Review: Journey's End



John Charlton reviews
The Oxford Playhouse's
production of the First
World War drama Journey's
End by R.C. Sherriff.

SET in the trenches in 1918, towards the end of the First World War, Journey's End follows a group of officers

positioned behind British lines in France, awaiting their fate before a massive German offensive. All the action takes place in the dugout, a dark and damp living quarter deep underground where the men, eat, sleep, plan and prepare for battle. The senior officer Captain Stanhope, played superbly by James Norton, is admired and respected by his men and senior officers. However the stress of war is beginning to tell on Stanhope and he struggles to keep control of himself and his men. The arrival of an old school friend 2nd Lieutenant Raleigh, almost tips Stanhope over the edge and the drama moves into a period of conflict amongst the officers. Although the play deals with a violent and

disturbing time in history, there is also a great deal of humour. The actor Christian Patterson who plays 2nd Lieutenant Trotter, deserves a special mention for his excellent delivery of great one liners, lightening the atmosphere on what could otherwise be a deeply depressing subject.

The play ends with the German offensive and the deafening sound of machine gun fire and explosives which increases in volume to an almost unbearable level. The audience is left in no doubt what is going to happen to the soldiers. The curtain descends in darkness before being brought up to reveal the cast standing motionless in front of a memorial and the sound of birdsong. A very moving and also tragic end to this one last journey for the soldiers.

NEW art project in Kennington and Blackbird Leys

WITH the support of Modern Art Oxford, artist Stephen Willats is inviting people from Blackbird Leys to create an artwork that connects their imagination to the world around them. The aim of the artwork is for people in Blackbird Leys and Kennington to create new ways of perceiving how the environment they live in could be different. Using the simple tools of new media, residents will be asked to look at the language of their environment (be it visual, verbal or audio) and transform the world as it is to the world as it could be. Throughout the project, participants will be given full support and guidance by Stephen Willats through workshops with the artist situated in local facilities. The resulting artwork will be a dynamic, ever changing picture, taking the form of an interactive screen installation in Blackbird Leys, Kennington and Modern Art Oxford.

Stephen Willats has worked continually in Oxford since the 1960s, including Blackbird Leys (1972-73) and Friar's Wharf (1978).

Stephen will make a presentation of his ideas on Wednesday 20 April at 6pm in Blackbird Leys Youth and Community Centre (Leys Links entrance) and looks forward to seeing you there so that he can explain his ideas in person. Refreshments will be provided.

New youth drama spans 4,000 years of history

PEGASUS YOUTH THEATRE Companies will premiere a new play by Oxford poet Jenny Lewis from Wednesday 30 March to Saturday 2 April. Inspired by the first written story ever recorded of the legendary king of Uruk, the verse drama After Gilgamesh compares ideas of war, leadership and the consequences for citizens in modern day and historic times.

The story includes the point of view of the incidental characters, the faces in the crowd, who bear witness to the spectacle of superpowers (and deities) behaving badly. A modern soldier lies wounded and unconscious in a field hospital. Flitting between his life and visions of the ancient world, he sees the legendary deeds of Gilgamesh, the god king, and the trials placed upon him by the immortals who ruled. The production includes specially choreographed dance and choral work, performed by the 14 to 19-year-old Pegasus Youth Theatre Company members with the singers from the Oxford based Afropean Choir.

The production promises lavish full-scale musical theatre piece with a provocative question – has anything changed in 4,000 years?

After Gilgamesh

At Pegasus Theatre, Magdalen Road, Oxford OX4 1RE

From Wednesday, 30 March to Saturday, 2 April, 7.30pm. Saturday: 1.30pm.

Tickets: full price £7, concessions £5, under 18s £4

Box Office 01865 812 150

www.pegasustheatre.org.uk

Another May Morning tradition is a performance by cult singer-songwriter John Otway. This year you can see him play at Oxford's oldest pub, the Bear, in Alfred Street, starting at 6am.



Wonder Woman diary

JANE YATES is Leys News resident cartoonist and has big plans to run a marathon this year. She will be keeping us all up to speed with her progress through her Wonder Woman diary. Here is her third installment...

I LEFT MY last article on a high note as I had just run 10k on a tread mill. This was the first time I had run that far since I was 16 and before I had discovered cider, Showaddywaddy and the fact that boys did not smell as bad as I had first thought!

So with the start of a fresh month ahead of me, I have decided to train more outside, however, this is totally due to the fact my gym membership has run out. So no more aqua aerobic classes, where I had the joy of feeling at 48-years-old that I was the youngest in the class.

2 February

I was shown a copy of my first column and was so excited I decided to run back from the Leys News office in Greater Leys to the Mill (Oxfordshire Mind) at the end of Cowley Road. I had Googled the distance and it was 3.8 miles, but without Wonder Woman navigation skills I think I ran about four miles as I went through two parks on the way back, when I remember only going through one park on the way there? Or it could have been the same park twice from different directions? Anyway as I ran down the Cowley Road, a man shouted out to me, 'you go girl', I felt like I was 'rocky' from that film. I was happy, but also I felt a bit like I was over heating. I saw a much older lady running on the other side of the road in a coat with a rucksack and fingerless mittens, how did she do that? I was down to a T shirt. When I got to The Mill, I ran upstairs and had a quick wash in the sink, I had brought a clean T shirt with me, one my daughter had thrown out, which to my horror once on, was totally see through! There was no way I could go down stairs with all the men folk sat there and I was too hot to put my jumper on. So I went and

lay down in the art gallery on the top floor, which was quite nice as all my paintings filled the walls, only to be disturbed seconds later by a worried manager who had caught sight of someone lying still in the gallery and was worried she had a suicide on her hands.

3 February

Decided that the fat spaniel had had it easy up to this point, so took her on a long run/walk as the weather was nice. I was surprised she was quicker than me, and in fact ran circles around me. Why do spaniels do that, run in circles? Not that I could point fingers after running in circles around 'the Leys' earlier in the week.

Running on wet muddy grass was much harder than running on the tread mill at the gym. I had planned ahead and brought water for us both, crisps for me and low fat dog biscuits for the spaniel, however after the extra effort I ate my crisps before the half way mark and had drunk most of the water, I had thought about eating the spaniel's biscuits, but decided I would probably survive until I got back home.

5 February

Did nothing, not even got out of my pyjamas.

6 February

Feeling like I needed some more motivation, bought a running magazine and read it. Worried as I felt I was beginning to like the look of some of the Lycra clothing. Dismissed this thought as part of my mid life crisis.

7 February

Walked two miles with the shopping trolley of shame.

12 February

Had trouble getting up this morning, beginning to lose motivation,



Left to right: Jane Yates, Kamlesh, Saima, Ambreen, Niki, Monica and Teema. Photo taken by class instructor, Gale.

eventually got up and ran half a mile to the library, with my books in a backpack.

Worried that I am still eating all the wrong types of food, but at the same time worried that they have discontinued pop tarts as they are proving hard to find. Thinking maybe I need to use a bit of Jedi warrior training, to get my mind in the right space for the half marathon challenge ahead. I bought four medium size Easter eggs containing mini eggs and lined them up on my mantel piece. If I can resist them I am sure to get in the right frame of mind for serious fitness training. So far OK, as I still have a large supply of Jaffa cakes.

13 February

Failing the Jedi warrior test after only a couple of hours, I have decided to put the remaining eggs in a safe place until Easter. I am normally very good at putting things in a safe place, like my passport, birth certificate or even just my keys or phone and even although my house is not much larger than a

cupboard, once these important items are put away, they are almost impossible to find, even by me.

19 February

Really lacking motivation today and its raining! My son, James, e-mailed me one of his favourite motivational sayings, 'when you can't be bothered, get changed into your kit, step out the door and then decide'.

I will take his advice but also couple this with one of my favourite sayings, 'don't do today, what you can put off until tomorrow'.

22 February

It was raining, I did not want to go out for a walk and the spaniel did not want to go out for a walk, she kept stopping and wanting to go home, honestly I'm sure she thinks these walks are for my pleasure and does not understand why she has to come along, especially when it's raining! Went home and ate an Easter egg, felt a little better and swam at the local pool, it was a lengths session. There were three lanes, fast, medium and slow.

Length swimming is a bit like driving you car on the motorway, you have to judge your speed and the other drivers speed and get in the right lane. As I was a medium to fast swimmer, I decided that everyone swimming slower than me was swimming too slow and should get in the slow lane and likewise everyone swimming faster than me really should be in the fast lane.

However I soon discovered that it did not quite work like that. There was other similarities with driving such as the boy racers, who splash past you at great speed, the large tanker lorries who hog the lane (usually men), and the worse ones are the dangerous drivers, who are the old ladies who do the back stroke without looking where they are going and plough into you!

Please could you write into the paper and recommend some good songs to run to. Also if you know where you can still by pop tarts, the jam and icing ones please let me know!



S & R CHILDS INDEPENDENT FUNERAL SERVICES

Pharmacy House, 69 London Road, Headington,
Oxford OX3 9AA Tel: (01865) 427272

10 The Parade, Oxford Road, Kidlington,
Oxford OX5 1EE Tel: (01865) 378888

142 Oxford Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2DZ
Tel: (01865) 714007

4 Elms Parade, Botley, Oxford OX2 9LG
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Hampden House Business Centre

Serviced offices, virtual offices and meeting rooms available to help your business make the right impression. For viewings call Chris Williams on 01865 893200 chris@jennings.co.uk www.hampden-house.co.uk

ENTERTAINMENT

Ouch! - the band

Rock, soul and pop for a great party, wedding or corporate event. If you're looking for great atmosphere, great music, a bit of a sing along and just a cracking night out you'll love the Ouch band. Contact: Charlie 07710 970992 www.ouchband.co.uk

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Hawtin Electrical can offer you free estimates and advice complete with a friendly affordable service. Whether you are looking for a simple addition to your lighting or power needs, having troubles with your electrics, completely re-wiring your house or starting from scratch, then Hawtin Electrical is the right choice for you. Niceic Part P approved domestic electrician. Call 07811 401279 jameshawtin@hawtin-electrical.co.uk website: www.hawtin-electrical.co.uk

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Beauty, health and well being Therapist.

100% organic Forever Living Skincare and Sonya Colour Cosmetics. Personalised skincare and colour consultations in the comfort of your own home. Manicures and pedicures with massage. (Available for charity work too). For women who are suffering or in remission with cancer, I can help re-create eyebrows and teach how to apply natural false eyelashes. I also teach colour make up. Girls Night In! - pamper parties at home, the host will receive one free product and 10% off her order for booking and hosting the party. Staying in, is the new going out! Established since 1992 Fully Insured By FHT. IHBC VTCT IHBC IHHT City & Guilds. Call Fabia Cerra on 07905 428835 fabia@soaringteam.com www.fabiacosmetics.co.uk www.againstbreastcancer.org.uk

Reach new customers in your local area with a Leys News Classified ad. Advertise your business from as little as £10 per issue (when booking for 12 months). To book your space ring John on 01865 711756

What's on in the Leys

A quick guide to what's available locally. If you have a service or event you'd like to include, please ring 01865 711756.

ADVICE

Agnes Smith Advice Centre
Gives free independent and impartial advice. Drop-in sessions are in the centre on Mondays 2.00–4.00pm and Fridays 10.00am–12.00pm. Also in the Farmhouse on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am–12pm. ☎ 01865 770206

CHILDREN

Breastfeeding Café on Monday 1.00pm – 2.00pm at Leys Children's Centre, Cuddesdon Corner. ☎ Camille Kalaja 0789 995 8316

Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Battalion Army Cadet Force
Sandy Lane West. Boys and Girls ages 13 to 18. Thursdays 7.30–9.30pm. ☎ 01869 259681

Blackbird Leys Youth Centre
Blackbird Leys Road. Variety of activities & advice for young people. ☎ 01865 772886.

Brownies: Thursdays, Holy Family Church Hall. ☎ Gill Manning, 01865 770959

Dovecote - Afterschool Club
Mondays – Thursdays, 3.15pm – 5.00pm, £1.30 per session. ☎ 01865 712299

Maluchy group for Polish speaking families with children ages 0-5 years. Saturday 10.00 am – 11.30am, Pegasus School. ☎ Agata 07874 187 704

35th Oxford Scout Group

Leys Kiddie Club

In the Dovecote Family Drop-in Room, Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, 9.30am–2.30pm. £1. Price includes a hot drink and a soft drink for children.

☎ Duncan Bowler, 0776 6293353
duncan@35thoxford.com

Rainbows: Girls aged 5 to 7. Fridays during term time, 5.30–6.30pm, at the Holy Family Church Hall on Cuddesdon Way. ☎ Laura Turner, 07787528120

Starlight Community project
Some of the courses and groups on offer:

- A course for women - gain self confidence, develop skills for work or further learning
- IT courses
- Dad's group
- Black British History course
- Parent Forum
- Get ready for work course
- Literacy & Numeracy skills
- Group for families with black children of mixed heritage

☎ 01865 778514
www.starlightproject.co.uk

EDUCATION

Able Centre
Free courses in Maths and English. ☎ Annette 776334

Blitz IT Courses
IT for beginners, internet, email, file management, PC maintenance and more. ☎ 01865 714492

Oxford Women's Training Scheme ☎ 01865 550227
hmluckie@ocuc.ac.uk

LEISURE

Irish dancing. Sacred Heart Hall. Weds & Thurs, 5pm.

Boxing training. Youth Centre at the Leys Linx, Blackbird Leys Rd. Tues & Thurs 7.30–9.00pm. ☎ 01865 715815.

BL Swimming Pool
Blackbird Leys Road. General swimming times are Mon & Fri

5.45–6.45pm, and Sat & Sun 11.15am–1.00pm. Thursdays, 12–1pm, parent and toddlers. Saturdays and Sundays, 2.30–3.30pm, families only. ☎ 01865 467042.

Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre
● Bouncy fun for under 5s, Mon, 10.30–12pm

- Body Conditioning, Mon, 10am–11am
 - Tae Kwon Do, Tue, 6–7pm
 - Pilates Beginners, Tue, 7pm–7.45pm
 - Aerotone, Wed, 6–7pm
 - Tae kwon Do, Thu, 5–6pm
 - Circuit Training, Thu, 7.05pm–7.55pm
 - Boxercise, Fri, 10–11am
 - Step & Tone, Fri, 6–7pm
- All activities cost from £1.20

BACK 2 BADMINTON

Coach present to provide tips to improvers or motivation for people who just want to get back into sport. Sessions run between 9 February – 13 April. Wednesdays, 8-9pm. £2.90. Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. ☎ 467020 to book a place

OLDER PEOPLE

Prime Time Over 50s group, Wednesdays, 10.30am - 3.30pm, at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road (£1.50). Keep fit, bingo, indoor bowls, speakers, activities and trips. ☎ 07534 740589

Golden Circle
☎ Bernard Tucker, 460592

Silver Circle
☎ 435954 (Prime time tel. via Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre)
Monday lunch club
☎ Anne Appleton, 422231

Leys Community Church Over-60s Club
☎ Keith Templar, 715815

WELLBEING

The Listening Centre
A counselling service for Blackbird Leys and Oxford. Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre. ☎ 01865 794794

Slimming World
Every Thursday, 5.15pm & 7.00pm, Leisure Centre, Pegasus Road. ☎ Gill, 01865 730009

Survivors
Fridays and Saturdays, Blackbird Leys Community Centre, 9.30pm – 3.30pm. All welcome. A self-help group of people who use or have used Mental health Services, working together to get support for, to share experiences and to press for greater awareness of the needs of survivors. Lunch available for £1. Pudding 50p. Breakfast from 50p. Card making. Table top sales. ☎ 07729 581975

NETWORKING

Leys WI
Meets at the Clockhouse on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm. ☎ Rachel Fisher on 07863 563583 to find out more. www.theleyswi.moonfruit.com

Leys Women's Business Network. For women who have or are interested in starting their own business, however big or small. First Tuesday of the month, 7.30–9.00pm. £1 suggested donation. 26 Kingfisher Green ☎ 01865 395960

THE CLOCKHOUSE

Activities, Friendship, Learning and Fun for the over 50s.
The Clockhouse, Long Ground, Greater Leys, OX4 7FX
☎ 01865 395908 E: clockhousecdi@btconnect.com

TUESDAY 10 MAY: Day Trip to Compton Acres Gardens, Poole, Dorset

ENJOY A DAY out visiting the beautiful Compton Acres Gardens in Dorset, near the seaside. Coach leaves from the Clockhouse Community Centre in Greater Leys 8am. Cost £20 per adult includes transport, and entry fee to the gardens. BOOKING ESSENTIAL with payment by Wednesday 20 April. Organised by SLIGO Gardening Club. Adults of all ages welcome.

☎ 01865 395908 for more details and booking info.

Line Dancing For over 50s - Monday 4 April: 1.30 – 3.30pm (£2). Monthly dances. Beginners very welcome.

Yoga for over 50s Tuesdays 10–11am (£2). Try this friendly, relaxed session. Helps you feel better in body and mind.

Crafts group for over 50s Weds 11am–12.30pm (£1) (Bring your knitting and crochet, and have a natter.)

Tai Chi for over 50s Thursdays 10–11am (£2). Graceful, slow-moving exercise. Improves flexibility and boosts energy.

Gardening Club. Thursday 7 April – 2 pm (£2). Hill Top Gardening in Wales (talk by club member Anne Appleton). Meetings are on first Thursday of the month. All welcome.

Computer courses for over-50s. Learn at your own pace with the Clockhouse IT Project Group. Complete beginners very welcome. FREE. Tel: 07962 887379 for details.

NEW! Informal support group for carers.

Are you caring for an adult family member or friend? Do you sometimes feel drained, or isolated? Meet and chat with other carers over a cuppa, in this friendly new monthly group.

First meeting: Monday 11 April 2–3.30 pm.

Over 50s Drop-in Advice Session at the Clockhouse

FREE monthly confidential advice on benefits, debt, housing and consumer issues. Bring details of your income/savings and find out if you're entitled to extra financial help.

Next dates: Monday 28 March, Monday 23 May (a week earlier than usual because of bank holiday). 10am–12noon both dates. No advice session in April. Outreach by Agnes Smith Advice Centre.

CHURCH NEWS

The Church of the Holy Family

☎ Rev David Parry, 01865 778728
& Rev Adam Stevenson, 01865 714163
www.holyfamilybbl.co.uk

Eucharist: Every Sunday, 10am, with children's activities.

Timeout: Reflective evening worship. Most Sundays, 6.30pm.

Church Office Hour: Mondays (except bank holidays) at 6.30–7.30pm. For hall bookings, wedding arrangements and enquiries.

Fellowship for Bible: Study, discussion and prayer. Most Wednesdays at 7.30pm. During December there will be an Advent theme.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Balfour Road, Blackbird Leys (car park in Poulton Place)

☎ Phone the church office 01865 776903, for all enquiries, baptisms, and next year's First Holy Communions, etc.

Sunday Masses: 9.30am, with music and children's liturgy; 12noon in Portuguese; and at 6.00pm.

Leys Community Church

☎ Richard & Kate Colbrook, 01865 714153

Meets on Sundays, 3.30pm at the Church of the Holy Family. Meetings include special activities for children and young people.

YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Parish Council

Chairman: Gordon Roper; **Vice Chair:** Gerry Webb; **Non-position holders:** Tanya Prescott
Chris Hatton, Cyril Martin, Mrs Ann Booker, Mrs Sheila Smith, Brian Lester, Pat Stannard, Rae Humberstone (see City Council section below)

For further details telephone 01865 716943 during office hours of 9am–5pm, Monday to Friday. Send mail to Parish Council, 13 Bailey Road, Oxford, OX4 3HU.

Oxford City Council

Blackbird Leys Ward



Val Smith – Labour
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD
☎ 07767 446051
valsmith@gmail.com
or cllrvsmith@oxford.gov.uk
(her city councillor entry)



Rae Humberstone – Labour
75 Little Bury, Blackbird Leys
☎ 01865 779678
cllrhumberstone@oxford.gov.uk

Val Smith and Rae Humberstone will be doing street surgeries every other week. They can also visit people in their homes – ring or email to make arrangements.

Northfield Brook Ward



Stuart Craft – Independent Working Class Association
5 Emperor Gardens, Greater Leys, Oxford, OX4 7WB.
☎ 07733 274324

Surgery: Every Tuesday from 6.30 to 7.30pm at the Clockhouse.



Scott Seamons – Labour
2 Orchard Court Roase Hill Oxford OX4 4HJ
☎ 07910 595047
cllrseamons@oxford.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council Leys & Lye Division



Val Smith – Labour
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD
☎ 07767 446051
val.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Richard Stevens – Labour
Flat 6 Eaton Court, Water Eaton Road, Oxford OX2 7QT
☎ 07725 353031
richard.stevens@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament Member of Parliament for Oxford East



Andrew Smith – Labour
Unit A
Bishops Mews
Transport Way
Oxford OX4 6HD
☎ 01865 595790
andrewsmith.mp@virgin.net

Surgery: Every third Friday at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre from 3.00pm



Cartoon by Jane Yates

Leys News aims to bring you the best in local sporting action. If you would like to sponsor this page please email editor@leysnews.co.uk or ring 01865 711756

Leys Sports

IS IT TOO LITTLE TOO LATE?



Oxford United – Crewe Alexandra 2:1

Goals: Constable 29' and 67' – Leitch-Smith 90+4'

United:

Clarke – Batt, Wright, Worley, Tonkin – Heslop, McLaren (61' Payne), Burge – McLean (89' Hackney), Constable, Craddock (61' Potter)

Crewe:

Taylor – Ada, Artell, Dugdale, Blanchett (68' Tootle) – Murphy, Westwood, Bell – Moore (82' Leitch-Smith), Donaldson, Miller

Referees: C. Boyeson – A. Crysell, D. Rock

Attendance: 6751

Recent League Games:

26/02	Oxford – Hereford	0:2
01/03	Lincoln – Oxford	3:1
05/03	Stockport – Oxford	2:1
12/03	Port Vale – Oxford	1:2
15/03	Oxford – Stevenage	1:2

CHRIS WILDER'S Oxford United recorded another home win, convincingly beating Crewe Alexandra on a warm, sunny March afternoon. However, many supporters were leaving the Kassam Stadium with a bitter aftertaste thinking about the points that have been thrown away by the

Yellows in the last few games.

The manager, unhappy about United's inconsistency, made five changes to the starting eleven - most notably bringing back James Constable and also giving Ryan Burge his first appearance for the club.

It took only four minutes for these two to combine together and threatened the visitor's goal but in

the end Constable dragged his effort wide.

The next 20 or so minutes were mostly uneventful with both sides passing the ball around the pitch without creating too many clear-cut chances.

With almost half an hour gone Oxford finally netted the first goal of the afternoon and inevitably it had to

be Constable. The captain shot from 20 yards completely wrong footing Rhys Taylor and the ball slowly crossed the line brushing the inside of the right post.

In the second half Oxford again looked happy to keep possession but as long as the score remained 1-0 there was still a chance the visitors could find a way back into the game.

It took 67 minutes to secure all three points for the home side. Burge linked with Constable yet again but this time United striker was not to be denied.

Crewe scored a consolation goal, which bore a striking resemblance to the Oxford's first, deep into stoppage time but in the end the final score flattered the guests from Cheshire.

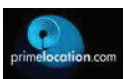
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POTTERS COURT Social Club Corner

Saturday 16 April

Coach trip to see Banbury

Follow the historic town trail; see the Banbury Cross; visit the open air market, the shopping centre and Canal Museum. Try a Banbury Cake if you dare!

The Coach leaves Potters Court at 9.30am and will return about 4pm.

There are a number of seats available at £12 for the trip. Anybody who would like to come should contact Ian Morgan at Potters Court, 01865 771865

29 April

Royal Wedding Party

Other planned trips include Cotswold Wild Life Park in May and a Streamer trip on the Thames in June.